

# A POST-WORLD WAR II VIEW OF MARX'S HUMANISM, 1843-83; MARXIST HUMANISM IN THE 1950's AND 80s\*

"Don't talk to me about space ships, a trip to the moon, or Marx, about life in the atomic age . . .

"We live like this. In darkness, in mud, far away . . .

"Don't tell me it is worse in Africa. I live in Europe, my skin is white. Who will embrace me to make me feel that I am human?"

– Karoly Jobbagy  
Budapest, April 1956

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The two-fold problematic of our age is: 1) What happens *after* the conquest of power? 2) Are there ways for new beginnings when there is so much reaction, so many aborted revolutions, such turning of the clock backward in the most technologically advanced lands?

Self-emancipatory movements, both from the emergence of a whole new Third World which had won its independence from imperialism – Africa, Asia, Latin America, Middle East, as well as revolts within the Western world itself, articulated themselves as what I have called "a movement from practice that was itself a form of theory." The ambivalence in the theoretical developments persisted though they reached for a total philosophy.

The world had hardly caught its breath from the devastation of World War II than already it was confronted with the birth of the nuclear age in the form of the A-bomb. Nor was the "high-tech" confined to war: it at once moved into production, first into the mines and then soon invading all of industrial production. The very first to battle automation were the U.S. miners on General Strike in 1949-50 against the introduction of the continuous miner, which they called the "man killer." What was new in this proletarian revolt was that, instead of just fighting unemployment and demanding better wages, the miners were posing totally new questions about what *kind* of labor man should do, and why there was an ever-widening gulf between thinking and doing.

Three years later, we witnessed the first-ever uprising from within the Communist world, which had been preceded by Yugoslavia's first act of national independence from Russia, and which was followed by revolts within the Vorkuta forced labor

\* This essay, completed on May 1, 1987, was the last scholarly article written by Raya Dunayevskaya before her sudden death on June 9, 1987 at the age of 77, while in the midst of a book entitled "Dialectics of Organization and Philosophy: 'the party' and forms of organization born out of spontaneity." This essay was intended for the *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Socialism*, a Yugoslav project whose completion is now uncertain.

camps in Russia, itself. The East European revolts seemed to be continuous. They expressed themselves most luminously in one form or another of Marxist Humanism: in Poland there appeared a work in 1957 called "Toward a Marxist Humanism"; in Yugoslavia there was a tendency that called itself "Marxist Humanism"; in 1968 in Czechoslovakia it was termed "Socialism with a Human Face." The revolt has continued to this day in ever-new forms, such as Solidarnosc in Poland today. Multi-forms of struggles for new human relations to free us from the limited choice of East or West circled the world.

In the United States, the first full theoretical declaration of Marxist-Humanism was my work *Marxism and Freedom*,<sup>1</sup> which declared the whole purpose of the work as "aiming to re-establish Marxism in its original form, which Marx called 'a thoroughgoing Naturalism or Humanism.'" This 371-page book has undergone five different editions, and been translated into French, Spanish, Japanese, Italian, with some chapters translated and circulated underground by individuals in Russia, Poland, China, and South Korea.

In Latin America, the young Fidel Castro embraced Humanism in 1959. He said at that time, "Standing between the two political and economic ideologies being debated in the world, we are holding our own positions. We have named it Humanism, because its methods are humanistic . . . this is a humanist revolution, because it does not deprive man of his essence, but holds him as its aim. . . . This revolution is not red, but olive-green."<sup>2</sup>

## I. New Passions and New Forces: The 1950s' Rediscovery of Marx's 1844 Humanist Essays

Rather than a seeming accident, and far from being at best a remembrance of things past on the part of the Old Left, the 1950s' rediscovery of Marx's 1844 Humanist Essays was altogether new, todayish, precisely because it speaks to this age's problematic – "What happens after?" How could so great a revolution as the November 1917 Russian Revolution, the only successful proletarian revolution in the world, which established the first workers' state, degenerate into Stalinism? What happens after the conquest of power?

Nothing like that was facing Marx and yet, by discovering a whole new continent of thought and of revolution, which he had named "a new Humanism," Marx had pointed to a direction beyond communism. In his break with capitalism, though he had singled out the proletariat as *the* revolutionary class, he expanded the need for totally new human relations by at once questioning the capitalistic alienated concept of the Man/Woman relationship. Not only that. It was clear that the overthrow of private property capitalism would not end by overthrowing private property; it was as necessary to break with "vulgar communism." Instead of either materialism or idealism, there would be a new unity of idealism and materialism:

"Just as atheism, as transcendence of God, is the becoming of theoretical humanism, and communism, as transcendence of private property, is the vindication of actual human living as its own property, which is the becoming of practical humanism, so atheism is humanism mediated by transcendence of religion, and communism is humanism mediated by the transcendence of private property. Only

by the transcendence of this mediation, which is nevertheless a necessary pre-supposition, does there arise *positive* Humanism, beginning from itself.”<sup>3</sup>

In 1950, when the workers battled automation and raised the question of “What kind of labor?”, a new stage of cognition appeared in the economic sphere. This, as we saw, was followed by political and social battles for truly new human relations.

The emergence in our age of a new Third World, not only Afro-Asian but Latin American and Middle East, was no mere geographic designation, as massive and substantive as that was. Rather, Third World became synonymous both with new forces of revolution and with those new forces as Reason. These new revolutionary forces – peasants as well as proletarians, Women’s Liberationists as well as youth anti-war activists – saw in that most exciting color, Black, so deep a revolutionary dimension and so intense an internationalism imbedded in their national liberation struggles, that, far from being a “Third” World, it encompassed the whole world.

The world of the 1960s, indeed, was aflame with rebellion, North and South, East and West. The depth of the revolt that freedom fighters in East Europe unleashed against the Communist totalitarians characterized, as well, the new generation of revolutionaries in the West, rebelling against the bureaucratic, militaristic, capitalist-imperialist world they did not make.

The African Diaspora meant not only South Africa but South U.S.A., and Black meant not only Africa – South, West, East and North –but also Latin America, including the Caribbean. The emergence in our age of a new Third World was no mere geographic designation, as massive and substantive as that was. Rather, Third World became synonymous both with new forces of revolution and with those new forces as Reason. Whether it was the slogan, “Ready or not, here we come,” which Nkrumah used as he led the general strike and the mass demonstrations that won independence for Ghana, or whether it was the Africans who criticized the pre-independence intellectuals’ concept of Negritude, the point was that the many voices of the Black Dimension used a single global word: “Freedom!” both in the Third World and in the U.S.<sup>4</sup>

Black consciousness in the United States put American civilization on trial. There is very nearly no end to the varied forms in which the Black Dimension expressed itself. It was the Montgomery Bus Boycott,<sup>5</sup> where the *daily* revolutionary activity – taking care of transportation, organizing meetings, holding marches, creating their own direct democracy in mass meetings three times a week – helped launch the Black Revolution.

A look at another new force – Women’s Liberation – will show that by the 1970s it had developed from an idea to a *movement*. Though it was itself faced with contradictions of class, race and culture, it had a determining effect on the whole emancipatory process, whether this came from East or West, North or South.

A penetrating look into the incomplete emerging Portuguese Revolution appeared even before the mass revolt against fascism burst forth, in a book called *The Three Marias*, which gave notice of an opposition which the authorities thought they could silence by imprisoning its three authors. So powerful was the protest pouring forth from the Women’s Liberation Movement *internationally*, that not only did the authors gain their freedom, but an autonomous women’s movement became integral to the revolution itself. Despite this fact, Isabel do Carmo – who headed the revolutionary group PRP/BR (Revolutionary Party of the Proletariat/Revolutionary

Brigades), which had raised the historically urgent question of *apartidarismo* (non-partyism) for the first time within the Marxist movement – dismissed the autonomous Women's Liberation Movement as purely petty-bourgeois, that is to say, non-revolutionary. But as the revolution faltered and she was again arrested, she rethought the whole struggle of both the revolution and its incompleteness, while the Women's Liberationists continued their activity for her release. She concluded: "I'm beginning to think our whole struggle, the struggle of the Revolutionary People's Party, was really a fight carried on by women."<sup>6</sup> That extreme declaration, when you are talking of the revolution as a whole – and being mindful that the Portuguese Revolution really started in Africa – is as wrong as her previous denial of the Women's Liberation Movement; but the objectivity of that movement as a new revolutionary force and Reason is undeniable.

The Youth, who have always been what Marx called the energizing force of every revolution, are now showing themselves not only as the most courageous but as those who are developing new ideas, new forms of organization, and new relationships of theory to practice. Even the bourgeois press has had to note a new type of radical who goes from his classroom, whether in academia or in an underground discussion club on Marx, directly into the mass demonstrations and battles – as is true right now in South Korea, South Africa, Haiti and the Philippines.<sup>7</sup>

## II. The Global Myriad Crises and Counter-Revolutions

The counter-revolutions that we in the 1980s are now battling had been nurtured by the U.S. defeat in Vietnam, because the U.S. had been operating on the grand imperial illusion of the 1970s that they supposedly could have both guns and butter. This was the lie; what the militarization actually produced was the global structural economic crisis of 1974–75.

Marx's greatest theoretical work, *Capital*, marched onto the present historic stage even among bourgeois ideologues, since there is no other way to understand today's global economic crisis. Thus, *Business Week* (June 23, 1975) suddenly started quoting what Marx had said on the decline in the rate of profit as endemic to capitalism. It even produced official graphs from the Federal Reserve Board, the Department of Commerce, Data Resources, Inc., as well as its own data, all of which showed that the post-World War II boom had ended.<sup>8</sup>

The capitalists may not be ready to "agree" with Marx that *the* supreme commodity, labor-power, is the only source of all value and surplus value, but they do see the decline in the *rate* of profit compared to what *they* consider necessary to keep investing for expanded production in a nuclear world.

By now, in the 1980s, we are far beyond what the serious bourgeois economist, Simon Kuznets, wrote in the early post-war period when he said that "the emergence of the violent Nazi regime in one of the most economically developed countries of the world raises grave questions about the institutional basis of modern economic growth – if it is susceptible to such a barbaric deformation as a result of transient difficulties."<sup>9</sup>

Reagan's retrogression started by turning the clock backward on all the gains won by the civil rights struggles,<sup>10</sup> the battles fought by the Women's Liberation

Movement, by the Black Dimension, by the Youth. After six years of Reaganomics, nearly three million are now officially estimated as homeless in the U.S. – a number which exceeds that recorded in the Great Depression of the 1930s. What is new today is that, within this class-divided society ever-larger segments of the working class are sinking so rapidly into pauperism that Marx's absolute general law of capitalist accumulation has moved to the realm of actual description.

The over eight million who are officially listed as "unemployed" in the U.S. are "average," and do not reflect the situation in what are known as the "rust belts," depressed industrial centers where unemployment is over 10 to 12 percent. When it comes to Black unemployment, the figure is as high as 20 percent. The statistic of eight million unemployed doesn't even mention the 1.3 million "discouraged" workers who no longer search for jobs regularly, or the six million part-time workers who want, but cannot find, a full-time job. The enormous lines that form in industrial cities whenever job openings are announced – 10,000 in Detroit recently applying for 30 openings – are the proof of the severity of the crisis.

Women and children are the hardest hit. In Mississippi today more than one family in three is living below what even the Reagan administration calls the "poverty line." In Chicago, the infant mortality rate now exceeds that of Costa Rica. The Physicians' Task Force on Hunger recently called the situation in Chicago "as bad as anything in the Third World countries," and pointed to the soaring tuberculosis rate.

Youth, Black youth especially, have before them a lifetime of unemployment or minimum-wage jobs. In Detroit, every high school student knows that he or she will never be able to get a job in the auto plants; in Pittsburgh it is the same for the steel mills. Even in that mecca of "high-tech," the Silicon Valley of California, where only a few years ago computer production was hailed as the answer to U.S. economic decay, there are now layoffs and fears of homelessness.

Inseparable from the continuing economic crises has been the extension of the U.S. imperialist tentacles, which came to a climax in the Spring 1986 imperial intrusion into the Gulf of Sidra and the actual bombing of the headquarters and the home of Col. Kaddafi. Without resting for a single instant, the U.S. continued with its raising of a counter-revolutionary army of mercenaries trying to overthrow the legitimate government of Nicaragua. This series of outright invasions of other countries began with the unprovoked invasion of Grenada in October, 1983.

The fact that the first shot of counter-revolution in Grenada was fired by the "revolutionaries" themselves, *its* Army, politically and militarily headed by Gen. Austin (plus Coard), demands that we take a deeper look at the type of revolution that erupted in Grenada in 1979. It is impossible not to be moved by the last words spoken by the leader of that revolution, Maurice Bishop, as, in utter shock, he looked at the Army shooting into the masses who had just released him from house arrest: "My God, my God, they have turned the guns against the people."

That does not free us from facing the stark fact that the first shot of counter-revolution came from *within* the revolutionary Party-Army-State. That first shot opened the road for the imperialist U.S. invasion that, it is true, lay in wait from Day One of the revolution. This, however in no way absolves the "Party" of its heinous crime. The fact that Castro – though an "internationalist" who spelled out his solidarity in concrete acts such as sending Grenada doctors and construction

workers, teachers as well as military advisers – nevertheless failed to develop the ideas that were at stake, left the masses unprepared for ways to confront the divisions within the leadership that were to have gory consequences.

Instead of Castro focusing on a theory of revolution, he substituted and based himself on what he called the “principle of non-interference in internal affairs.” He proceeded to praise Bishop for adhering to that “principle” by not asking for help in the leadership disputes – as if these were mere matters of “personality” and merely “subjective,” rather than the result of the *objective* pull backward *because* the revolution itself was barren of a philosophy. Castro disregarded the dialectics of revolution – that is to say, the digging into what was coming *from below, the mass consciousness, its reasoning*. Instead, both he and the Grenadian leadership reduced the ideas of freedom to “subjective, personality” matters.

While the savage, unprovoked, long-prepared-for imperialist invasion and conquest of Grenada makes it imperative to never let go the struggle against U.S. imperialism until it is vanquished, it is urgent to face the retrogressive reality in the Left as well.

This is exactly why, in the whole post-World War II period, Marxist Humanists have been raising new questions on forms of battle, on the need for spontaneity, on the struggle against single-partyism: indeed, raising the whole question of what kind of philosophy can become *the* motivating force of all the contemporary struggles. The most acute expression of this was articulated by Frantz Fanon, who, while giving up his French citizenship to become an African revolutionary, at the same time critiqued the new leadership that arose with decolonization: “‘Leader’: the word comes from the English verb, ‘to lead,’ but a frequent French translation is ‘to drive.’ The driver, the shepherd of the people no longer exists today. The people are no longer a herd: they do not need to be driven.” Fanon further concretized his critique of the “Leader” and his cohorts who formed the dominant party: “The single party is the modern form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, unmasked, unpainted, unscrupulous and cynical.” His conclusion about the African revolutions was that: “This new humanity cannot do otherwise than define a new humanism both for itself and for others. . . .”<sup>11</sup>

### III. Once Again, Marx – this Time with Focus on His Final Decade and on Our Age

“The philosophy of PRAXIS is consciousness full of contradictions in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not merely grasps the contradictions, but posits himself as an element of the contradictions and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore of action.”

– Antonio Gramsci  
“Problems of Marxism”

The newness of our age was seen in the whole question of Humanism, of the relationship of party to spontaneity, of mass to leadership, of philosophy to reality.

On October 23, 1956, a student youth demonstration in Budapest was fired upon.<sup>12</sup> Far from dispersing the young students, these were soon joined by the workers from the factories in the outlying suburbs. The Revolution had begun in earnest. During the following 13 days, ever broader layers of the population

revolted. From the very young to the very old, workers and intellectuals, women and children, even the police and the armed forces – truly the population to a man, woman and child – turned against the top Communist bureaucracy and the hated, sadistic AVO (secret police). The Communist Party with more than 800,000, and the trade unions allegedly representing the working population, just evaporated. In their place arose Workers' Councils, Revolutionary Committees of every sort – intellectuals, youth, the army – all moving *away from* the Single Party State.

Overnight there sprang up 45 newspapers and 40 different parties, but the decisive force of the revolution remained the Workers' Councils. When 13 days of armed resistance was bloodily crushed by the might of Russian totalitarianism, the new form of workers' organization – the factory councils – called a general strike. It was the first time in history that a general strike *followed* the collapse of the revolution. It held the foreign imperialist as well as the “new government” at bay for five long weeks. Even Janos Kadar said he was listening to the demands of the Workers' Councils for control over production and the “possible” abrogation of the single party rule.

What none but Marxist-Humanists saw as the *transition point* between the East German Revolt of 1953, the outright Hungarian Revolution of 1956 and its philosophy was revealed in two seemingly unconnected events in 1955: 1) the Montgomery Bus Boycott opened the Black Revolution in the U.S. and inspired a new stage of revolution in Africa as well; 2) in Russia, there suddenly appeared, in the main theoretical Russian journal, *Questions of Philosophy* (No. 3, 1955), an academic-sounding article entitled “Marx's Working Out of the Materialist Dialectics in the Economic-Philosophic Manuscripts of the Year 1844.” It was an attack on Marx's Humanist Essays, contending that the young Marx had not yet freed himself from Hegelian mysticism and its “negation of the negation.” What the state-capitalist rulers calling themselves Communists had become oppressively aware of was the mass unrest, especially in East Europe. What they feared most was a new uprising.

Simply put, although the Russian theoreticians chose to shroud the philosophic phrase in mysticism, ever since Marx had materialistically “translated” the Hegelian Dialectic of negativity as the philosophy of revolution, “negation of the negation” stood for an actual revolution. What the Russians fear most is exactly what erupted in Hungary in 1956. In all the changes since then, nothing truly fundamental has been altered. This is seen most clearly of all in the fact that it has always been the Single Party State that remained the all-dominant power. In this, China – Deng's China as well as Mao's China – has held to the same totalitarian principle.

This over-riding fact makes it urgent to turn once again to Marx, this time not to the young Marx and his “new Humanism,” nor to the mature Marx as a supposed economist, but to Marx in his last decade, when he discovered what we now call his “new moments” as he studied pre-capitalist societies, the peasantry, the women, forms of organization – the whole dialectic of human development.

Because politicalization has, in the hands of the Old Left, meant vanguardism and program-hatching, we have kept away from the very word. It is high time *not* to let the “vanguard party to lead” appropriate the word, politicalization. The return is to its original meaning in Marx's new continent of thought as the uprooting of the capitalist state, its withering away, so that new humanist forms like the

Paris Commune, 1871, emerge. Marx himself was so non-vanguardist that, although the First International had dissolved itself, he hailed the railroad strikes spreading throughout the U.S. and climaxed in the 1877 St. Louis General Strike, as both an elemental "post festum" to the First Workingmen's International Association, and the point of origin for a genuine workers' party.

For that matter, the whole question of pre-capitalist societies was taken up long before that last decade. In the 1850s, for example, what inspired Marx to return to the study of pre-capitalist formations and gave him a new appreciation of ancient society and its craftsmen, was the Taiping Revolution. It opened so many doors to "history and its process" that Marx now concluded that, *historically-materialistically* speaking, a new stage of production, far from being a mere change in *property-form*, be it "West" or "East," was such a change in *production-relations* that it disclosed, in embryo, the dialectics of actual revolution.

What Marx, in the *Grundrisse*, had defined as "the absolute movement of becoming" had matured in the last decade of his life as new moments – a multilinear view of human development as well as a *dialectic duality within each* formation. From within each formation evolved *both* the end of the old *and* the beginning of the new. Whether Marx was studying the communal or the despotic form of property, it was the human resistance of the Subject that revealed the direction of resolving the contradictions. Marx transformed what, to Hegel, was the synthesis of the "Self-Thinking Idea" and the "Self-Bringing-Forth of Liberty" as the emergence of a new society. The many paths to get there were left open.

As against Marx's multilinear view which kept Marx from attempting any blueprint for future generations, Engels' unilinear view led him to mechanical positivism. By no accident whatever, such one-dimensionality kept him from seeing either the communal form under "Oriental despotism" or the duality in "primitive communism" in Morgan's *Ancient Society*. No wonder, although Engels had accepted Marx's view of the Asiatic mode of production as fundamental enough to constitute a fourth form of human development, he had left it out altogether from *his* analysis of primitive communism in the first book he wrote as a "bequest" of Marx – *Origin of the Family*. By then Engels had confined Marx's revolutionary dialectics and historical materialism to hardly more than Morgan's "materialism."

In Marx's revolutionary praxis, the germ of each of the "new moments" of his last decade was actually present in his first discovery. Take the question of the concept of Man/Woman, which he raised at the very moment when he spoke of the alienations of capitalist society and did not consider them ended with the overthrow of private property. This was seen most clearly in the way he worked during the Paris Commune, and in the motions he made to the First International. One such motion at the 1871 London conference recommended "the formation of female branches among the working class." The Minutes recorded: "Citizen Marx adds that it must be noted that the motion states 'without exclusion of mixed sections'. He believes it is necessary to create exclusively women's sections in those countries where a large number of women are employed (since) they prefer to meet by themselves to hold discussions. The women, he says, play an important role in life: they work in the factories, they take part in strikes, in the Commune, etc. . . . they have more ardour than the men. He adds a few words recalling the passionate participation of the women in the Paris Commune."<sup>13</sup>



Nor was it only a question of the women. In a speech at this same London Conference of the First International – Sept. 20, 1871 – Marx said: “The trade unions are an aristocratic minority. Poor working people could not belong to them; the great mass of the workers who, because of economic development, are daily driven from the villages to the cities, long remain outside the trade unions, and the poorest among them would never belong. The same is true of the workers born in London’s East End, where only one out of ten belongs to the trade union. The farmers, the day laborers, never belong to these trade unions.”<sup>14</sup>

Or take the whole question of human development. Marx definitely preferred the gens form of development, where, he concluded, the communal form – whether in ancient society, or in the Paris Commune, or in the future – is a higher form of human development. The point is that individual self-development does not separate itself from universal self-development. As Hegel put it: “individualism that lets nothing interfere with its universalism, i.e. freedom.”

While Marx considered the gens a higher form of human life than class society, he showed that, in embryo, class relations actually started right there. Most important of all is that the multilinear human development demonstrates no straight line – that is, no *fixed* stages of development.

The difficulty is that post-Marx Marxists were raised not on Marx’s Marxism, but on Engelsian Marxism – and that was by no means limited to Engels’ *Origin of the Family*. Rather, Engels’ unilinearism was *organic* – which is why we must start from the beginning.

Marx’s Humanist Essays showed his multilinearism, his Promethean vision, whether on the concept of Man/Woman relationship, or the question of idealism and materialism, or the opposition not only to private property capitalism but what he called “vulgar communism”, which is why he called his philosophy “a new Humanism.”

These motifs are the red thread through his final decade, as well. The Iroquois women, the Irish women before British imperialism, the aborigines in Australia, the Arabs in Africa, Marx insisted in his *Ethnological Notebooks*,<sup>15</sup> have displayed greater intelligence, more equality between men and women, than the intellectuals from England, the U.S., Australia, France or Germany. Just as he had nothing but contempt for the British scholars, whom he called “rogues,” “asses,” and “blockheads,” who were expounding “silliness,” so he made a category of the intelligence of the Australian aborigine, since the “intelligent black” would not accept the talk by a cleric about there being a soul without a body.

How could anyone consider the very limited quotations from Marx that Engels used in the *Origin of the Family* as any kind of summation of Marx’s views? How could someone like Ryazanov think that those *Ethnological Notebooks* dealt “mainly with landownership and feudalism”? In truth they contain nothing short of both a pre-history of humanity, including the emergence of class distinctions from within communal society, and a history of “civilization” that formed a complement to Marx’s famous section in *Capital* on the historical tendency of capitalist accumulation which was, as he wrote to Vera Zasulich, “only of Western civilization.”

One Russian scholar, M. A. Vitkin (whose work, “The Orient in the Philosophic-Historic Conception of K. Marx and F. Engels,” was suddenly withdrawn from circulation), did try to bring the Marx-Engels thesis on the Asiatic Mode of

Production, if not on Women's Liberation, into the framework of the 1970s. This original contribution had concluded that "it is as if Marx returned to the radicalism of the 1840s, however, on new ground." And the new ground far from being any sort of retreat to "old age" and less creativity and less radicalism, revealed "principled new moments of his (Marx's) philosophic-historic conceptions."

It was in his last decade, as he finished the French edition of *Capital*, that Marx wrote his *Critique of the Gotha Program*, on which Lenin's profound revolutionary analysis of the need to break up the state was based. Lenin failed, however, to say a word about what in Marx's critique of the Gotha Program is the foundation of a principled proletarian organization, which led Marx to separate himself from the unity of the Eisenachists (who were considered to be Marxists) and the Lassalleans. Nor was there any reference by Lenin to his own critique of *What Is To Be Done?*, Lenin's main organizational document.<sup>16</sup> He thus disregarded the twelve years of self-criticism during which he insisted that *What Is To Be Done?* was not a universal, but a tactical question for revolutionaries working in Tzarist Russia. Instead, it was made into a universal after the revolution. This set the ground for a Stalin – that is to say, for the problem that remains the burning question of our day: What comes after the conquest of power?

It gives even greater significance to the question that Rosa Luxemburg raised both before the 1917 Russian Revolution and directly after.\* "The revolution," Luxemburg wrote, "is not an open-field maneuver of the proletariat, even if the proletariat with social democracy at its head plays the leading role, but is a struggle in the middle of incessant movement, the creaking, crumbling and displacement of all social foundations. In short, the element of spontaneity plays such a supreme role in the mass strikes in Russia, not because the Russian proletariat is 'unschooled,' but rather because revolutions are not subject to schoolmastering."<sup>17</sup>

The dialectic of organization, as of philosophy, goes to the root of not only the question of the relationship of spontaneity to party, but the relationship of multilinearity to unilinearity. Put simply, it is a question of human development, be it capitalism, pre-capitalism or post-capitalism. The fact that Stalin could transform so great a revolution as the Russian Revolution of 1917 into a state bureaucracy tells more than just the isolation of a proletarian revolution in a single country. The whole question of the indispensability of spontaneity not only as something that is in the revolution, but that must continue its development after; the question of the different cultures, as well as self-development, as well as having a non-state form of collectivity – makes the task much more difficult and impossible to anticipate in advance. The self-development of ideas cannot take second place to the self-bringing-forth of liberty, because both the movement from practice that is itself a form of theory, and the development of theory as philosophy, are more

\* Lenin's philosophic ambivalence had become so crucial for our age that I wrote a chapter with that as its title for my work, *Philosophy and Revolution*; the chapter, indeed, was published separately even before the book itself was published. Its timeliness in the year 1970 opened many new doors for Marxist Humanism. Thus, I spoke to such widely different audiences as the Hegel Society of America and the first conference of the young radical philosophers of *Telos*. The chapter was also published by *Aut Aut* in Italy and by *Praxis* in Yugoslavia. The opening to so many different international forums was in great part due to the fact that, because 1970 was both the 200th anniversary of Hegel's birth and the 100th of Lenin's, there were all sorts of criss-crossings of those two events.

than just saying philosophy is action. There is surely one thing on which we should not try to improve on Marx – and that is trying to have a blueprint for the future.

May 1, 1987

#### NOTES

1. The first edition of *Marxism and Freedom – from 1776 until Today* (New York: Bookman Associates, 1958), actually published in 1957, had appended the first English translation of Marx's 1844 *Humanist Essays* and the first English translation of Lenin's *Abstract of Hegel's Science of Logic*.

2. See *New Left Review*, 7, Jan.–Feb. 1961, p. 2.

3. Karl Marx, "Critique of the Hegelian Dialectic, 1844," in *Marxism and Freedom*, pp. 319–320.

4. See Ngugi wa Thiong'o's "Politics of African Literature" and René Depestre's "Critique of Negritude." Both are included as appendices to Lou Turner and John Alan, *Frantz Fanon, Soweto, and American Black Thought* (Chicago: News & Letters, 1986). In general, it is necessary to become acquainted with the underground press in South Africa. The journal, *News & Letters*, publishes many articles and letters each issue as a "South African Freedom Journal."

5. See especially Charles Denby, *Indignant Heart: A Black Worker's Journal* (Boston: South End Press, 1978), pp. 181–189.

6. See *New York Times*, Feb. 24, 1984.

7. See both *New York Times*, June 17, 1986, and *Wall Street Journal*, Feb. 26, 1987.

8. See my pamphlet, *Marx's Capital and Today's Global Crisis* (Detroit: News & Letters, 1978).

9. Simon Kuznets, *Postwar Economic Growth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964).

10. On the 100th anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation, at the beginning of the Black Revolution in the U.S., the National Editorial Board of News & Letters published *American Civilization on Trial* (Detroit: May 1963). A fourth, expanded edition was published in 1983, with a new Introduction on "A 1980s View of the Two-Way Road Between the U.S. and Africa," (Chicago: News & Letters, 1983).

11. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), pp. 197, 316. See also my pamphlet *Nationalism, Communism, Marxist Humanism and the Afro-Asian Revolutions* (Cambridge University: The Left Group, 1961), and new edition (Chicago: News & Letters, 1984). Consult also *The Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, Marxist-Humanism, 1941 to Today*, held by the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, Walter Reuther Library, Wayne State University, Detroit, and available from them on microfilm, which includes my letters written from Africa, 1962.

12. For a report from the Central Workers' Council of Greater Budapest, see *The Review*, Vol. II:4, 1960, published in Brussels by the Imre Nagy Institute. See also an "Eyewitness Report of How the Workers' Councils Fought Kadar," *East Europe* (New York), April 1959; and Miklos Sebestyen, "My Experiences in the Central Workers' Council of Greater Budapest," *The Review*, Vol. III:2, 1961. In my *Philosophy and Revolution, from Hegel to Sartre and from Marx to Mao* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1982), see especially "Once Again, Praxis and the Quest for Universality," pp. 263–266.

13. Quoted in Jacques Freymond, ed., *La Première Internationale, Recueil et documents*, Vol. II (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1962), pp. 167–168 (my translation).

14. Quoted in Karl Marx, *On the First International*, edited by Saul K. Padover (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973), p. 141.

15. Lawrence Krader transcribed Marx's Notebooks which were published as *The Ethnological Notebooks of Karl Marx* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1972). For my analysis, see my *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1982).

16. Lenin's many critiques of the concept of vanguardism and centralism during the development of Marxism in Russia were published in Russia as a pamphlet entitled *Twelve Years*. See his "Preface to the Collection *Twelve Years*," in Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. 13 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1978), pp. 94–113.

17. Quoted in my *Rosa Luxemburg, Women's Liberation and Marx's Philosophy of Revolution*, p. 18, where the whole question of Luxemburg as a revolutionary, as a theoretician, as an unknown feminist, is developed.